

it's impossible to depend on your eyes when your head is out of focus. I know the eyes go. The heart goes too. Figs, I can't believe it, little heads in my memory, fled.

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## The Word Made Flesh: A Culinary Exploration of Transubstantiation

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came in to being . . . But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us . . .*

JOHN I: 1-14

*On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, the Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."*

*After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."*

*The Book Of Common Prayer, Episcopal Church, 1979*

"Now look up what the *Received Word* has to say about mashed potatoes," my grandmother instructs me. It is Thanksgiving, and we are in the kitchen, as always. Gran is in charge; my mother, and now I, are the *sous chefs*. The *Received Word*, as we call it, is actually Barbara Kafka's *Microwave Gourmet*, which contains microwave cooking times for all imaginable quantities of various foods. We all read cookbooks vociferously, but we hardly ever cook directly from them: they are more like critical texts that you might read to illuminate your understanding of, say, Emily Dickinson. But a few of these tracts are irreplaceable—they are the dictionaries and almanacs of our cooking, and the so-called *Received Word* is one of them.